

John J. Day

State Representative District 100

How To Reach Representative *John J. Day*

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232-9991

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our neighborhoods**
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Spring 1999

Dear Friend,

Democracy is, among other things, an act of faith, a belief that we will act in such a way that the public interest takes priority over partisan interest.

Unfortunately, in the recently concluded session we did not always meet that goal. While we did enact a number of worthwhile new laws and the new budget provides some modest tax relief plus increased support for education, services for senior citizens, the mentally ill and the developmentally disabled we were unsuccessful in a number of important areas.

Our *unfinished agenda* includes enacting optional full-day kindergarten, important economic development bills affecting banking and insurance companies, increased assistance to injured workers (workers compensation), an update of our Indiana tax code to reflect new federal tax laws, and meaningful nursing home reform.

In this 1999 newsletter, let me review new amendments to the income, property and inventory tax laws, state aid to education and our Indianapolis Public Schools budget, plus the main features of the nursing home reform bill. In the Good News Department for our district I want to recognize some school and community volunteer efforts.

I am pleased to tell you about a new law that will benefit our children in the years to come. HB 1410 requires that all newborns be screened for hearing loss. Early detection and treatment can greatly assist children with hearing loss to develop language skills within the normal range.

Working for tax fairness, sponsoring bills to promote child health, listening to concerns of our senior citizens, cooperating with others to improve our schools are all part of the experience of being your representative. Thanks again for giving me the opportunity to serve our community.

All the best,

John J. Day

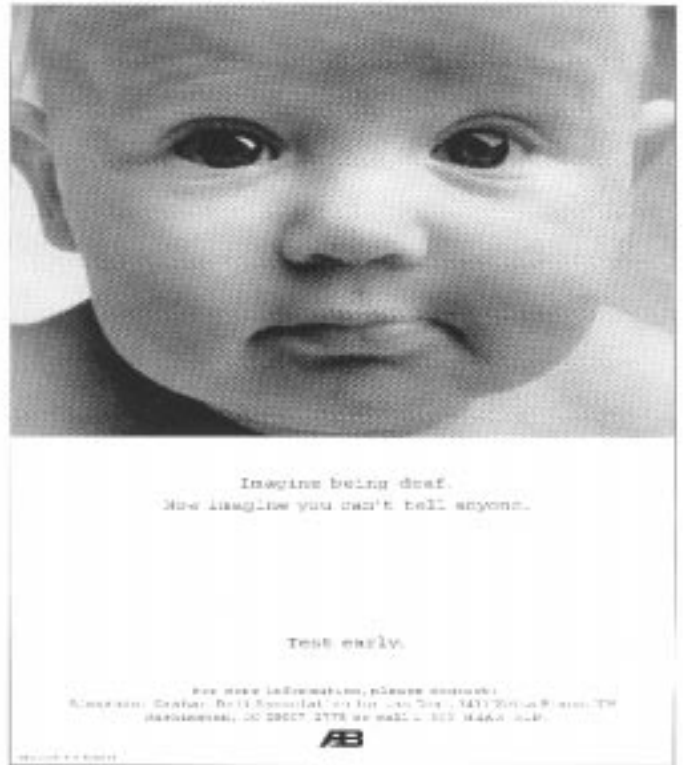
1999 Session of the Indiana

Newborn Screening for Hearing Loss

There are about 85,000 births per year in our state. Three percent of these infants have hearing loss. Talks with parents and people associated with the Deaf School and Riley Hospital convinced me that Indiana should require testing of all newborns so that if children have hearing loss their parents can be encouraged to seek treatment.

Hearing loss in infants is a serious concern because it interferes with the acquisition of language skills. Most language development occurs before age three. Delayed language skills often lead to reduced academic success, vocational achievement and lifetime earnings.

Children whose hearing losses are identified early in life (first six months) and who receive intervention services are more likely to develop their language skills within the normal range. Thus, HB 1410 was introduced. This new law takes effect July 1, 1999.



Reprinted with permission from the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf.

Nursing home reform --- not yet

Sen. Pat Miller (R-Indianapolis) and I had different versions of a reform bill. Late in the session, after hours and hours of work we came to an agreement and part of my bill was merged into the Senate bill.

The bill would have increased the fines for serious violations which endanger the life of a patient to \$20,000. The bill would have also given the Health Department the authority to ban new admissions to a facility until the serious violation was corrected. The original bill also required notice to be given to patients and their legal representatives when a serious violation occurred. This provision we learned can also be done by rule from the department. Finally, the bill would have created a study committee to review training and staffing questions so as to improve the quality of care.

This needed reform, along with perhaps 15 other bills, was still on the calendar at midnight on April 29 and thus not voted on. While disappointed, I plan to work with Sen. Miller and others next session and reintroduce this bill.



Here I am speaking with a class of social work students from IUPUI.

Each session a number of student, church and civic groups visit the statehouse. Not only do I enjoy visiting with them, I also benefit from listening to their ideas and suggestions.

If you know of a group that would like to spend some time at the statehouse let me know and I will try to arrange it.

diana General Assembly

The Good News department

- On April 17, Eastside Community Investments (ECI) had their 8th annual "Just Say Grow" project organized by Kathy Wallace. On a cold, overcast day 40 volunteers planted 70 trees. This brings the total to over 1000 trees planted in the past eight years.
- South East Neighborhood Development (SEND) recently worked with neighborhood volunteers, like Rachel Cooper of SECO and area businesses who donated money and volunteers, to establish a park on the corner of Spann and Randolph. The land near P.S. #39 was given to SEND as surplus property by the county. SEND landscaped the area, obtained play equipment and then gave the park to P.S. #39. The school promised to maintain the park which will benefit the children of the neighborhood. This is the third neighborhood park SEND has helped create.
- Again this spring I joined over 300 people associated with St. Phillip Neri School to participate in their 10th annual Walk/Run-a-thon at Brookside Park to raise money for the school. The event was both a social and fiscal success and raised about \$36,000.



Ms. Becky Nickols works with eighth grade students from Harshmann Middle school.

- Harshmann Middle School on 10th Street sponsored its 9th annual neighborhood clean-up, tree planting and tree maintenance program on Saturday, April 24. Faculty member Mrs. Tessie Lloyd Jones helped organize about 100 volunteers, including students, staff and area residents. The students involved really make a valuable contribution to the neighborhood and are a model of good citizenship.

I am always encouraged whenever I see or hear of such volunteer activities. More than ever we need a sense of community with the belief that working together can make a positive difference.

IPS to receive 4% increase in state aid

In this current year, the IPS budget is \$268.6 million, of which \$176 million is state aid. The remainder comes from property taxes (\$83.3 million) and excise taxes (\$9.3 million).

In the new school formula, IPS will receive about an \$8 million increase in each of the next two years. To the right is a chart pointing out the amount of money allocated to various education categories. There is regular state aid and then state aid by categories, for example special education, vocational education and Prime Time (K-3).

	CY 2000	CY 2001
Regular State Aid	\$151,684,292	\$157,378,334
Special Ed.	\$20,862,378	\$22,077,729
Vocational Ed.	\$1,121,293	\$1,702,780
At-Risk	\$7,770,547	\$8,030,442
Prime Time	\$3,070,165	\$3,075,235
Honors	\$85,100	\$93,425
Total State Aid	\$184,593,775	\$192,357,945
Local Property Tax	\$83,479,380	\$84,790,442
Excise Tax	\$9,622,206	\$9,960,678
Combined Total	\$277,695,361	\$287,109,065



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Tax Relief

- **Working Parents** -- There will be an increase in income tax deductions for each child from the present \$1500 to \$2500. This increase will result in a \$58 million savings in 2000.
- **Homeowners** -- There will be a new \$2500 income tax deduction for property taxes paid as a deduction from total income taxed. If a person is to be taxed on \$20,000 income who also pays \$2000 in property taxes that person can subtract the \$2000 from the \$20,000 income and then pay tax on only \$18,000 minus any other deductions the person is entitled to. Over the next two years this will save Indiana taxpayers more than \$110 million.
- **Property taxes** help pay for welfare costs. Roughly 33

percent of that cost will be eliminated from property taxes, those costs being absorbed by the state. This will save Marion County property taxpayers \$3.8 million in 2000 and \$7.7 million in 2001.

- **Renters** -- The renters deduction will be increased from \$1500 to \$2000. Renters can subtract up to \$2000 (rent payments) from total income that would be taxed, a savings of \$11 million per year.
- **Small Business Owners** -- There will be a state funded credit against one's property tax paid on the first \$12,500 of assessed valuation on personal property (inventory & equipment). This will eliminate the inventory tax for thousands of small businesses.

House publications available

The following publications can be requested free of charge from my Statehouse office by calling 232-9991:

Relax . . . -- This informational booklet for senior citizens discusses a variety of issues, from taxes to health problems to leisure activities.

Higher Education -- A 24-page publication for those interested in pursuing a higher education degree, detailing many Indiana colleges and universities as well as occupational and vocational schools.

Guide to State Agencies -- This booklet details various agencies within Indiana state government, listing phone numbers, functions and general areas of responsibility for each of the state agencies.

Hoosier Fun and Facts -- Designed for elementary school-aged children, this information and activity book teaches students about their state through a combination of text, puzzles and other educational activities.

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I appreciate your assistance in keeping the mailing list updated. This will ultimately result in more efficient delivery and substantial savings to taxpayers across the state.